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NSC BRIEFING

4 November 1953

LATEST SOVIET NOTE INDICATES  
USSR'S ATTITUDE TOWARD NEGOTIATIONS

I. During the last three months the Malenkov regime has turned down all Western invitations to talks:

A. A series of four Soviet notes has developed new excuses for avoiding four-power talks on Germany.

In its latest note of 3 November, the USSR demands that the West agree first to a conference including Communist China on "international tensions."

The Kremlin's evasive attitude probably springs from a recognition of the weakness of its propaganda position in view of its refusal to make any compromise involving the present frontiers of the orbit.

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C. At the same time, continued unrest in East Germany and Adenauer's electoral success may have increased the USSR's unwillingness to offer any sort of election proposal in answer to Western demands.

II. This note makes completely clear what has been implied in several previous ones: the Soviet Union is only willing to discuss Germany at a four-power foreign ministers meeting in conjunction with talks which include China on the broad field of international tensions.

III. This note and the previous one mentioned several topics suitable for five-power talks:

- A. Foreign bases;
- B. The armaments race;
- C. The danger of war propaganda;

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- D. Establishment of Communist China's "rights" in the UN and other international discussions;
  - E. Other problems in Asia.
- IV. This note, like the previous three, reveals an increasingly intransigent attitude on the German issue itself:
- A. It is the first official statement that the ratification of EDC would make impossible the restoration of Germany as a united state; according to the USSR, consideration of the German problem at a four-power foreign ministers conference would then be pointless.
  - B. This note particularly stresses that a discussion of foreign bases is a prerequisite to any German settlement.
  - C. The Soviet formula for a German settlement described in previous notes

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remains unchanged. The foreign ministers should set up:

1. A peace conference on Germany, to consider a draft treaty drawn up by the four powers. The West has held that free elections must be the first order of business.
2. A provisional all-German government which would plan and conduct elections without the interference of other powers. This would not meet Western guarantees for free elections.

V. The new note criticizes the Western suggestion for talks on European security:

- A. The USSR denies that EDC is in any way compatible with European security.
- B. It insists that only its own formula for a German settlement will guarantee European security.

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- C. It cites its bilateral treaties with France and Britain which might be strengthened to improve security.
- D. It hints vaguely at "existing new possibilities for ensuring security in Europe," probably to keep speculation going.

VI. As in previous notes, the Kremlin by-passed the Western proposal for negotiations on an Austrian state treaty.

vII. The Malenkov regime has also been refusing during the last few months to permit the holding of a Korean political conference:

- A. This 3 November note asserts that the USSR cannot accept the UN's invitation since the US Government will not agree to other "neutrals."

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B. The USSR probably wishes to avoid opposing Western proposals, such as free elections in Korea as well as Germany, which would command wide popular support.

VIII. The Kremlin has apparently concluded that it will be easier to blame the United States for failure to settle East-West differences if it does not reveal its unyielding hand at the conference table.

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